

Remarks

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 1-8, and 10-24 are pending in the application, with claims 1, 22, and 24 being the independent claims. Claims 1, 7, 8, 13, 14, 17, 22, and 24 have been amended to clearly recite features of the present invention. These changes are believed to introduce no new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.

Based on the above amendment and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-6, 9-18, and 22-24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being allegedly anticipated by Schneider et al. (U.S. Publication No. 2003/0092484). Claim 9 has been cancelled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter thereof. This ground of rejection is respectfully traversed with respect to remaining claims 1-6, 10-18, and 22-24.

In general, the claims of this application are directed to a process and apparatus whereby, in the event that a prize is determined to be awarded, that prize is ultimately allocated to a particular one of the gaming machines which caused the prize to be awarded. For example, considering the representative, non-limiting, embodiment discussed at paragraphs [0137] to [0140] of the published application, each gaming terminal accumulated amount corresponds to a contributory amount. These contributory amounts are centrally collated at the primary controller to increment a total contributory revenue amount. When this amount exceeds a randomly selected value, a prize is triggered. The prize is ultimately awarded to the gaming machine responsible for the contributory amount that effectively

pushed the total revenue over the limit. In this manner, the prize is awarded to the machine that actually caused the prize to be awarded.

In Schneider, once a prize is determined to be awarded, the identification of a gaming terminal (EGM) award of a prize is based on a two-stage random process. First, the primary controller (master server) randomly chooses an auxiliary controller (slave server), as discussed at paragraph [0025] of Schneider. Then the randomly chosen auxiliary controller (slave server) randomly chooses a gaming terminal [EGM] to which the prize is to be awarded, as discussed at paragraph [0026].

Schneider teaches the possibility of influencing the random selection process based on various parameters. However, it nevertheless remains a random selection process.

As noted, in Schneider, once a prize is determined to be awarded, the identification of a gaming terminal (EGM) award of a prize is based on a two-stage random process. On the other hand, the present claims are directed to a scenario where, once a prize is determined to be awarded, the identification of a gaming terminal (EGM) award of a prize is based on a predetermined non-random process, which identifies the gaming terminal that caused the prize to be awarded. That is, unlike in Schneider, the claimed invention provides a cause-and-effect relationship between activity at a gaming terminal, and the allocation of the prize to that gaming terminal, even though the decision to award that prize occurred at a primary controller.

More specifically, Claim 1 includes the following features not found in Schneider:

determining whether or not to award a prize based upon one or more of the total contributory amounts received from one or more of the auxiliary controllers, wherein a determination to award a prize is caused by a particular one of the total contributory amounts from a particular one of the auxiliary controllers;

analyzing the data associated with the determination and the data stored in the memory to determine which particular one of the gaming terminals caused the

prize to be awarded, and determining that a prize is to be allocated to that particular one of the gaming terminals.

Claims 22 and 24 contain analogous features not found in Schneider.

Claims 2-6 and 10-18 depend directly or indirectly from claim 1. Claim 23 depends from claim 22. These dependent claims are patentable over Schneider for at least the same reasons as their respective independent claims in addition to their own respective features.

For the reasons set forth above, it is clear that claims 1-6, 10-18, and 22-24 recite features that are nowhere found in Schneider. Schneider cannot be applied to reject the claims under 35 U.S.C. §102(e). Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of the Examiner's rejection is respectfully requested.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

A) Claim 7 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Schneider in view of Karmarkar (U.S. Patent No. 6,508,709). This ground of rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 7 depends from claim 1 and incorporates all of the features recited in claim 1. For reasons set forth above, it is Applicant's position that Schneider does not teach or suggest specific features recited in claim 1. Karmarker contains no teaching or suggestion that overcomes the deficiencies of Schneider with respect to claim 1. Therefore, the combination of Schneider and Karmarker cannot render claim 7 obvious under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the Examiner's rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim 8 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Schneider in view of Giobbi (U.S. Pub 2003/0045354). This ground of rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 8 depends from claim 1 and incorporates all of the features recited in claim 1. For reasons set forth above, it is Applicant's position that Schneider does not teach or suggest specific features recited in claim 1. Giobbi contains no teaching or suggestion that overcomes the deficiencies of Schneider with respect to claim 1. Therefore, the combination of Schneider and Giobbi cannot render claim 8 obvious under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the Examiner's rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 19-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Schneider. This ground of rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 19-20 depend from claim 1 and incorporate all of the features recited in claim 1. For reasons set forth above, it is Applicant's position that Schneider does not teach or suggest specific features recited in claim 1. Whether or not it "is a matter of design choice to a person having ordinary skill in the art to perform the action every 2 to 5 seconds," an hypothesis to which Applicant does not accede, this argument is irrelevant to the herein claimed invention. For reasons set forth above, parent claim 1 recites features nowhere taught or suggested by Schneider. Therefore, Schneider cannot render claims 19-20 obvious under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the Examiner's rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim 21 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Schneider et al. in view of Olsen (U.S. Patent No. 6,110,043). This ground of rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 21 depends from claim 1 and incorporates all of the features recited in claim 1. For reasons set forth above, it is Applicant's position that Schneider does not teach or suggest specific features recited in claim 1. Olsen contains no teaching or suggestion that overcomes the deficiencies of Schneider with respect to claim 1. Therefore, the combination of Schneider and Olsen cannot render claim 21 obvious under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

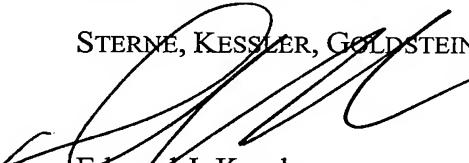
Reconsideration and withdrawal of the Examiner's rejection is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,


STERNE, KESSLER, GOLDSTEIN & FOX P.L.L.C.

Edward J. Kessler
Attorney for Applicants
Registration No. 25,688

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1100 New York Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005-3934
(202) 371-2600
961693.v1